Flashback

Journal of the Washington County Historical Society

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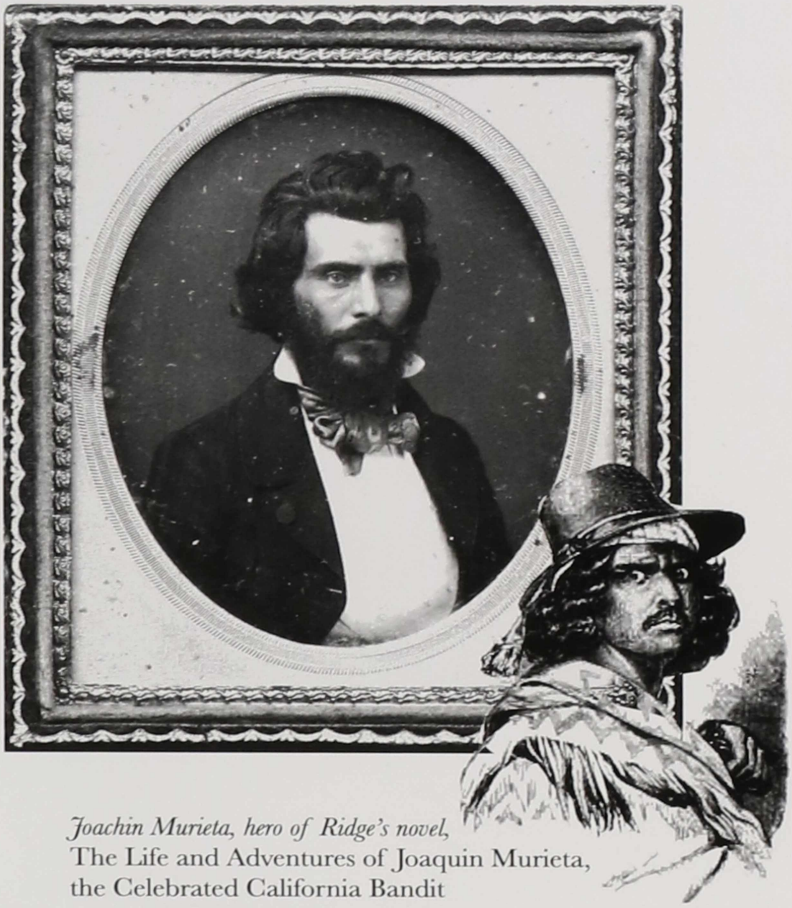
John Rollin Ridge

First Native American Novelist



Joachin Murieta, hero of Ridge's novel,
The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta,
the Celebrated California Bandit

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Flashback

Journal of the Washington County Historical Society

Preserving our past for future generations

Volume 74 | Fall 2024 | Number 3

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On the cover:
Artist's visualization of Joachin Murieta, the main character in John Rollin Ridge's book, *The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta, the Celebrated California Bandit*, considered to be the first novel by a Native American, and also with a Mexican protagonist. Shown with a daguerrotype of Ridge, who was the son of John and Sara Ridge. Both images from the California State Library.

John Rollin Ridge

First Native American novelist once called Fayetteville home

By J.B. Hogan

In the early morning hours of June 22, 1839, a group of men – presumed agents of Cherokee Principal Chief John Ross (with or without his knowledge and approval) – burst into the home of John Ridge. The attackers pulled John Ridge from his bed, dragged him outside his home, and in full view of his wife Sarah and their children, stabbed him some 29 times.[1] One of the children watching their father killed was the eldest son, 12-year-old John Rollin Ridge (born March 19, 1827). For Rollin, as he was familiarly known in his family, this horrendous scene affected the rest of his life.

Killed along with John Ridge were his father Major Ridge and cousin, Elias Boudinot. In the immediate aftermath of the killings, on July 1, 1839,[2] Sarah Ridge brought her seven children[3] from the family home near Honey Creek in the northeastern corner of Indian Territory to the relative safety of Fayetteville in the newly minted state of Arkansas, established in 1836. Fayetteville, founded in 1828 when Arkansas was still a territory, was barely a decade old itself and just 30 miles from the western frontier of the United States.

Sarah Ridge moved her family into an existing dogtrot home on what is now West Center Street in Fayetteville, and even though distraught herself, the grieving widow seems to have tried to establish a sense of nor-

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J.B. Hogan is a local historian, author, and frequent contributor to Flashback. *His article "Fayetteville and the Influenza Epidemic of 1918" (*Flashback, *Fall 2021) was awarded Best Community History in a County or Local Journal from the Arkansas Historical Association.*

malcy for herself and her children by continuing their education right away.

Education had always been a priority of the Ridge family, and when living in Georgia before the relocation, the children attended a school run by educator Sophia Sawyer. Sawyer had lived with the Ridges and accompanied them to Indian Territory where she had also established a small school. In Fayetteville, she quickly started a school which the Ridge offspring and other local children attended. This school was the Fayetteville Female Seminary which would become one of the best known and influential institutions of learning in the town and state. Sawyer also allowed boys to attend daytime classes, and John Rollin Ridge was, as he had been back in Georgia, one of the students at her school. Rollin also attended a male seminary in town conducted by Rev. William Scull, an Episcopal minister.[4]

John Rollin Ridge in 1850, at about 23 years of age. Courtesy of the California History Room, California State Library, Sacramento, California.

Around 1842, Mrs. Ridge moved the family to Osage Prairie (Bentonville) in Benton County.[5] This is also roughly when she sent Rollin back East to continue his studies. From about then until 1843 or early 1844, Rollin lived and studied in Great Barrington, Massachusetts (near his mother's family in Connecticut), and received a classical education at the Great Barrington Academy there.

Later in 1844, Rollin was back in Arkansas where he attended classes at Cephas Washburn's Far West Seminary in Mount Comfort, a few miles northwest of Fayetteville. He studied there until the summer of 1845 and by 1846, was studying law[6] – possibly under the tutelage of early Fayetteville settler and attorney A. M. Wilson, who often represented the Cherokee in legal matters.[7]

In 1847, the 20-year-old Ridge, who was beginning to write poetry under the name Yellow Bird (the translation of his Cherokee name Cheequat-a-law-ny), married Elizabeth Adelaide Wilson in Indian Territory. They moved to the farm Ridge had bought back in Honey Creek the previous year.[8] Little is known of Elizabeth's background other than that she originally came from Tennessee. The following year, the Ridges' daughter Alice Bird was born.

Any chance that Ridge's new life as husband, father, and poet would be stable and tranquil was dashed in 1849 when he killed a man, ostensi-

bly over a horse. Accounts of the incident indicate that a neighbor, David Kell, a pro-Ross man,[9] took one of Ridge's horses without permission and gelded the animal. Ridge confronted Kell, an argument ensued and then boiled over to the point that Ridge drew his pistol and shot the man dead. Doubting that he would get a fair trial in the state and fearing retribution from the Ross camp, Ridge fled to Missouri.[10] Later in the year, Ridge traveled to Osage Prairie to stay with his mother and the rest of the family living there.[11]

Remarkably, during these tumultuous last years of the decade, Ridge was actively writing and publishing poetry. In 1848, while he was still living with his new bride in Honey Creek, the *Arkansas State Democrat* newspaper printed his poems "My Harp"[12] and "To a Thunder Cloud."[13] He was only 21 years old and the deadly confrontation with David Kell, which would create havoc in his life, was at that time yet to come.

Around this same time, in the latter days of the 1840s, with the Mexican-American War just concluded, the gold rush began in earnest in the California hills. Several groups from the local area formed up and headed out in search of the precious mineral. On April 18, 1850, Ridge, accompanied by his brother Aeneas, threw in his lot with one of the later groups to leave. Led by Col. Matthew Leeper, among the first settlers of Fayetteville, this party took a northern route to California and the waiting promise of untold wealth.[14]

Although he had indicated in letters to his cousin Stand Watie that his plan was to someday return to Indian Territory and Arkansas,[15] it was not to be. When Ridge left for California – wife Elizabeth and daughter Alice Bird were left behind but would join him later – he never made it back home. Leaving the area also meant he would never have to stand trial for the killing of David Kell. The past was behind him and his destiny lay in the burgeoning expanse of the new and barely tamed American West.

While Ridge's dreams of gold would never pan out in California, his career as a newspaper man, poet, and novelist was about to strike a mother lode. Before the end of 1850, his poem "The Harp of Broken Strings" was published in the *Marysville* (California) *Herald*.[16] Marysville, the county seat of Yuba County, would play a prominent role in Ridge's journalistic career in years to come. The new arrival was immediately making a name for himself.

Settling in Sacramento, Ridge began providing stories about the exciting new land of California (it became a state on September 9, 1850) for the New Orleans-based *True Delta* newspaper. He continued publishing poetry as well, and his work appeared in such publications as *Alta California, Golden Era, Hesperian*, and *Hutching's Illustrated California Magazine* – as well as in the *Marysville Herald*.[17]

Then in 1854, the W. B. Cooke and Company of San Francisco published *The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta, the Celebrated California Bandit*. The book was, like his poetry, credited to Yellow Bird, with John Rollin

Left, Ridge with his daughter Alice; undated photo. Image found at Annenberg Learner, *American Passages: A Literary Survey*, "John Rollin Ridge (Yellow Bird)."
Right, Joaquin [Murieta], the Mountain Robber (c. 1848), the title character in Ridge's book. Artist unknown. Courtesy California State Library.

Ridge added parenthetically. At the time, the book was presented more as a historical work than a fictional one, but over time it has become known as the first novel published by a Native American, the first novel published in California, and the first American novel with "a Mexican protagonist."[18]

The book depicts the motivations and extraordinary exploits of the gentleman bandit, Joaquin Murieta, whose gang exacted revenge on gold miners, Chinese workers, and most anyone else unlucky enough to cross their revenge-minded path. The story, filled with frequent and graphic stories of gruesome violence against the backdrop of the new California land, reads more like a dime novel than a history book.

An early description of Murieta provides a look at Ridge's writing style. "The first that we hear of him in the Golden State is that, in the spring of 1850…He was then eighteen years of age, a little over the medium height, slenderly but gracefully built, and active as a young tiger. His complexion was neither very dark or very light, but clear and brilliant, and his countenance…exceedingly handsome and attractive."[19] This latter description of Murieta could have applied just as well, of course, to the author, Rollin Ridge, himself.

Having left his home in Sonora, Mexico, to make a better life in California just after the conclusion of the bitter Mexican-American War, Murieta finds deceit and maltreatment at the hands of the Americans he had once admired. Ridge takes pains to give his dashing gentleman hero legitimate reasons for creating the havoc that he does.

Murieta suffers three ignominious incidents at the hands of lawless Americans (read as "white men") that set him on his trail of crime, violence, and revenge. First, he is forced off his mining claim, beaten, and forced to watch as his attackers "ravished his mistress before his eyes." Then Murieta and his mistress try to make a living quietly farming in "a fertile valley," but once again "unprincipled Americans" drive him away. The resolute Murieta recovers again and becomes a successful gambler, dealing monte, a three-card game of chance popular in the Old West. But when he is caught riding a stolen horse given him by a half-brother, Murieta is bound and whipped, and the brother is later hanged.[20]

That is all Murieta can take, and he creates a gang that terrorizes the California countryside, committing crimes and killing at will. With his inner circle of Mexican outlaws, including the psychopathic killer Three-Fingered Jack, Murieta slaughters at will – especially "American" miners and Chinese workers.[21] The depredations become so heinous the government becomes involved and eventually Murieta, Three-Fingered Jack, and other henchmen and outlaws in their gang are killed or rounded up.

But even in death, Murieta's exploits and legend live on – thanks in no small part to *The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta*, presented initially as true history rather than fiction. Over time, with reprints and spinoff books by other authors and a posthumous, updated 1871 version, the book has since been recognized as fiction, a novel based on some real events but fictional nonetheless.[22] Eventually, the basic story would morph into the Zorro story – first published in 1919 by Johnston McCulley. Even the creator of Batman, Bob Kane, acknowledged his indebtedness to the Murieta story.[23]

Thematically, the fictional acts of Joaquin Murieta may reflect to some degree the reality that was John Rollin Ridge's personal life. Just as we have seen in Ridge's early, young life, deceit, violence, and revenge were driving forces that built and sustained his adult personality. It is not too much of a reach to suggest that the actions of Murieta often mirror the feelings, if not the acts themselves, of his real-life creator.

In the years after the publication of *The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta*, during the runup to the Civil War, Ridge continued to make a name for himself as a newspaperman. Among the papers he worked for or edited from around 1856 until the beginning of the war in 1861, were the *California American* out of Sacramento, and the *California Express*, *Daily National Democrat*, and *News*, all in Marysville. He is also credited with starting and editing the *Sacramento Bee*, although he was only with the paper a short time.[24]

As tensions increased leading up to the war, Ridge's positions were decidedly in line with his Southern background. While initially opposing secession, he was anti-abolitionist, pro-Douglas, and anti-Lincoln. He is believed to have been a member of the Knights of the Golden Circle, a

secret society that advocated slavery.[25]

During the Civil War, Ridge continued his newspaper career, editing the *San Francisco Evening Journal* and *National Herald* in 1861. He edited the *Red Bluff Beacon* in 1862 and the *Trinity National* in Marysville in 1863. By August of 1864 he was editing the *Grass Valley National*.[26]

In 1866, with the war over, Ridge joined his cousin E. C. Boudinot as part of a contingent that went to Washington D.C. to advocate for Southern Cherokee reparations from losses accrued during the conflict. The group met with President Andrew Johnson to present their case. Unfortunately, Ridge and Boudinot had a falling out after the meeting that involved the disbursement of monies granted to the delegates.[27]

After the D.C. trip, Ridge returned to California where he edited the *Grass Valley Daily Democrat*. By the fall of that same year, however, his health began to fail. He had contracted encephalitis, a dangerous condition causing inflammation of the brain. His health worsened through the end of 1866 and on into spring and summer of 1867. Finally, on October 5, 1867, John Rollin Ridge, at age 40, died in Grass Valley. He was buried two days later in what is now the Greenwood Memorial Cemetery in Grass Valley.

In the following year, 1868, his widow Elizabeth collected most of his extant poems and published them. The collection, simply titled *Poems by John R. Ridge*, was published by Henry Payot and Company of San Francisco and contains 44 poems of various lengths. Written in the lyrical, often highly expressive style of the late Romantic period, Ridge's poems may seem dated to modern readers. His topics, also reflecting the Romanticism prevalent at the time, typically have to do with nature, love, and progress – especially as it was seen in science and the growing United States.

Ridge's best-known poem, "Mount Shasta," is a nature poem. It is essentially an ode to this majestic mountain located in far northern California, which stands:

> Imperial midst the lesser heights, and, like
> Some mighty unimpassioned mind, companionless
> And cold. The storms of Heaven may beat in wrath
> Against it, but it stands in unpolluted
> Grandeur still....[28]

In addition to being in the posthumous collection, "Mount Shasta" originally appeared in the *Marysville Daily Evening Standard* in 1853. It was reprinted many times afterward, and Ridge put the entire poem in the early part of *The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta*. A sampling of other poetic titles in the "Mount Shasta" vein include "A Night Scene," "To a Mockingbird Singing in a Tree," and "To a Star Seen at Twilight."

Ridge also wrote several love poems, including "The Robber's Song to His Mistress," "The Still, Small Voice," and "A Cherokee Love Song." Sample lines from the latter poem show his style in this type of poetry:

Oh come with me by moonlight, love,
And let us seek the river's shore;
My light canoe awaits thee, love.
The sweetest burden e'er it bore![29]

Among the poems dedicated to progress, both scientific and of the nation itself, are "California," two called simply "Poem," and probably the best known of his optimistic celebrations on the topic "The Atlantic Cable," which follows "Mount Shasta" at the very beginning of *Poems*. In cheering the latest scientific breakthrough, Ridge could hardly be more enthusiastic:

Let Earth be glad! for that great work is done,
Which makes, at last, the Old and New World one!
Let all mankind rejoice! for time nor space
Shall check the progress of the human race![30]

In the end, although he had a solid body of poetic work as shown in *Poems*, John Rollin Ridge has been and still is mostly remembered for *The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta*, described by academic Hsuan Hsu as "one of the most influential and one of the most invisible novels in the history of American literature."[31] Whether Ridge's work is truly invisible or not, it continues to resonate today, and he is a serious subject for scholarly interest and research.

With the modern emphasis on social justice, Ridge is perhaps not remembered just for his own personal conflicts and contradictions but also for producing "a classic American story of anti-racist insurrection."[32] In sum, he was an important mid-19th century American author and his work, while a century and a half old now, still lives today – and Fayetteville was once his home.

Endnotes

[1] John Ridge and other members of his family were targeted because Major Ridge (John's father) and his nephew Elias Cornelius Boudinot (John's cousin) had been among the leaders who signed, without full support of the Cherokee Nation, the Treaty of New Echota which initiated the infamous Trail of Tears. The killers also targeted Stand Watie, Boudinot's brother, but Watie was warned in advance and was able to fend off the attack.

[2] James W. Parins, *John Rollin Ridge: His Life & Works* (Lincoln, Nebraska, and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), p. 32.

[3] The John Rollin Ridge children, oldest to youngest, were Clarinda, John Rollin, Susan, Herman, Aeneas, Andrew Jackson, and Flora.

[4] Parins, *John Rollin Ridge*, p. 36. Rollin enrolled in Rev. Scull's male academy in January 1841 along with his younger brothers Herman and Aeneas.

[5] Mrs. Ridge last paid taxes in Washington County in 1842; she began paying taxes in Benton County that same year, and paid taxes there until 1853, the year before she returned to Fayetteville. She died in Fayetteville in 1856. See "Ridge Family Records" in the Family History section of the Fayetteville Public Library reference area.

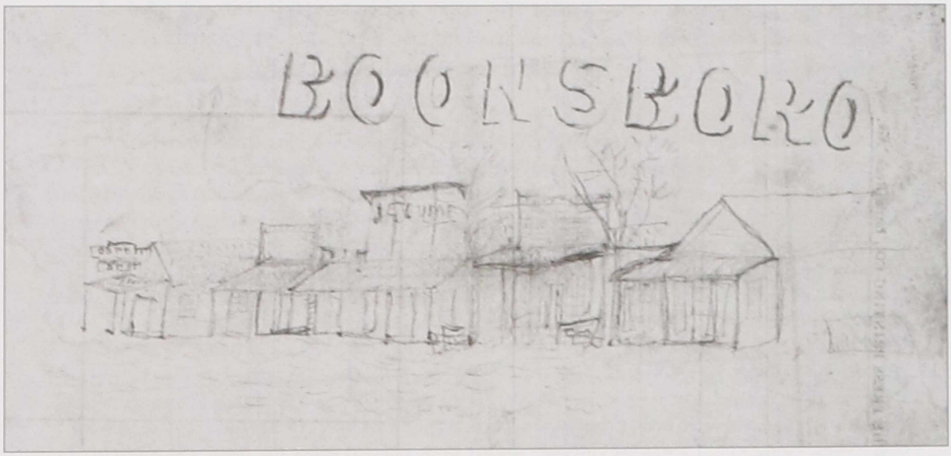
[6] Parins, *John Rollin Ridge*, p. 44.

[7] A. M. Wilson also taught law to E. C. Boudinot, son of the slain Elias Cornelius Boudinot and

cousin of John Ridge.
[8] Parins, *John Rollin Ridge*, p. 50.
[9] Being pro-Ross meant that Kell was believed to support Cherokee Principal Chief John Ross in the schism created when members of the Ridge family independently signed the Treaty of New Echota, which led to the Trail of Tears.
[10] Ibid., p. 55.
[11] Ibid., p. 58.
[12] Ryan Carr, "Lyric X-Marks: Genre and Self-Determination in the Harp Poems of John Rollin Ridge," working paper published through Queens College, City University of New York, 2017, p. 10. Internet document accessed March 9, 2023, at https://academicworks.cuny.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1221&context=qc_pubs. Also published by MELUS, Vol. 43, No. 3 (Fall 2018), pp.42-63.
[13] Gordon Fraser, "Yellow Bird and the Thunder," *Commonplace: the online journal of early American life*. Internet document accessed March 9, 2023, at http://commonplace.online/article/yellow-bird-and-the-thunder/.
[14] Parins, *John Rollin Ridge*, pp. 60-62.
[15] Ibid., p. 92.
[16] Carr, "Lyric X-Marks," p. 20.
[17] "American Indian Biography: John Rollin Ridge, Cherokee Writer," *Native American Netroots*. Internet document accessed March 9, 2023, at http://nativeamericannetroots.net/diary/827.
[18] Hsuan L. Hsu, "The Legend of Joaquin Murieta: A History of Racialized Violence," *The Paris Review*. Online document accessed March 9, 2023, at https://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2018/07/09/the-legend-of-joaquin-murieta-a-history-of-racialized-violence/. Hsu's article provides a clear and detailed look at Rollin Ridge, his personal background, and the complex and dangerous world of early California as delineated in the novel.
[19] Yellow Bird (John Rollin Ridge), *The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta, the Celebrated California Bandit* (San Francisco, California: W. B. Cooke and Company, 1854), pp. 8-9.
[20] Ibid., pp. 10-13.
[21] Ibid., pp. 16-17.
[22] Because *The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta* blends history and fiction with dialogue that the author could not have been privy to, the book is probably best considered creative nonfiction – even though such a writing category hadn't been defined when the book was written.
[23] Hsu, "The Legend of Joaquin Murieta." Online document.
[24] Parins, *John Rollin Ridge*, pp. 116, 120, 127, 136, 140.
[25] Ibid., pp. 180-183.
[26] Ibid., pp. 184-185, 189, 193-194.
[27] Ibid., pp. 214, 217-220.
[28] John R., Ridge, *Poems* (San Francisco, California: Henry Payot and Company, 1868), pp. 13-16.
[29] Ibid., pp. 43-44.
[30] Ibid., pp. 17-21.
[31] Hsu, "The Legend of Joaquin Murieta." Online document.
[32] Ibid.

Herbert Hoover's 1892 Sketch of Boonsboro

By Patsy G. Watkins



In the summer of 1892, 18-year-old future U.S. president Herbert Hoover was working with John C. Branner, former Arkansas state geologist, on a survey in Northwest Arkansas. While visiting the area around Cane Hill and Boonsboro in the southern part of Washington County, he was apparently inspired to pick up a pencil and sketch a street scene.

An image of that sketch, provided courtesy of Historic Cane Hill, is shown above.

Nearly 60 years after Hoover's visit, a UofA graduate doing research in state geological archives in Little Rock came across the sketch. The discovery caught the attention of Walter J. Lemke, and he included it in his very first issue of *Flashback*, published in March 1951. Without the technical capability to print a copy of Hoover's drawing, Lemke instead used a tracing of it accompanied by a short article.

Patsy G. Watkins is editor of Flashback. *She is retired from the UofA journalism program, which she chaired for 18 years, and is author of* It's All Done Gone *(UA Press, 2018).*

Now, 73 years after Lemke printed the tracing of Hoover's sketch – and 132 years after he drew it – *Flashback* is publishing an image of the original. The page from that first issue of the journal with the tracing and Lemke's brief piece about it is included below.

The copy of Hoover's original sketch was provided to *Flashback* by Lawrence McElroy, director of arts and culture at Historic Cane Hill. McElroy recently set out on a fresh search for the drawing, locating it eventually in the archives of the Arkansas Geological Survey.[1]

He has gone a step further and identified the buildings in Hoover's sketch by comparing it to an old photograph from the Cane Hill records.

BOONSBORO (Cane Hill)
Tracing from pencil sketch made in 1892 by Herbert Hoover, future president of the United States.

A University graduate, while investigating some old geological records in the Capitol at Little Rock, turned up a most interesting historic drawing -- an on-the-spot pencil sketch of "Boonsboro" (Cane Hill) in 1892, drawn by none other than Ex-President Herbert Hoover. The drawing is reproduced above. It shows five store-fronts on Cane Hill's main street. Two of the stores bear names that are almost illegible. Davis Richardson, who was born at Cane Hill and knows the community intimately thinks they are the general store and shoe repair shop.

As is well known, Herbert Hoover was a student in Leland Stanford Jr University of California in 1892 and came to the Arkansas Ozarks during the summer vacation to work with former Arkansas state geologist (later president of Stanford University), John C. Branner. Hoover surveyed the region from Washington County to Independence County.

The newly discovered picture of "Boonsboro" is drawn on the back of a topographic map of Township 13 North, Range 30 West, in Washington County. Drawn on the map (in Hoover's hand) are such water courses as Blackburn's Fork of Lee's Creek, Howard's Fork of Frog Bayou, and the West Fork of White River. The divide between Lee's Creek, which flows south, and White River, which flows north, is marked thus, in the ex-president's handwriting: "Deviding (sic) Ridge between Lee's and White Rivers".

Reprinted from "Boonsboro," by Walter J. Lemke, Flashback, *Vol. 1, No. 1 (March 1), 1951, p. 7.*

Photo (ca. 1910) of the area shown in Hoover's sketch. The Edmiston Store is the second building on the left. Courtesy Lawrence McElroy, Historic Cane Hill.

"The John Edmiston Mercantile Store is featured in the drawing. It once stood across the street from the [Historic Cane Hill] museum building," said McElroy. The photo above, provided by McElroy for reference, shows the area of the sketch circa 1910.[2]

In the 1800s, Boonsboro was a small community in one of the oldest settled sections of Washington County. Dating roughly from the 1830s, it was located just south of Cane Hill, which was settled in 1827 and considered to be the earliest settlement in the county. According to the *Encyclopedia of Arkansas*, Cane Hill was "also known as Boonsboro after Daniel Boone."[3]

Hoover, the 31st president, was trained as a mining engineer and was not known for any interest in sketching during his later years. In his spare time during his presidency, he was more likely to be found playing "Hoover-ball," invented by his physician to help Hoover keep fit. As a child growing up in West Branch, Iowa, he enjoyed fishing and working in his father's blacksmith shop.[4]

Endnotes

[1] Email from Lawrence McElroy, July 1, 2024.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Julanne S. Allison, "Cane Hill (Washington County)," *Encyclopedia of Arkansas*. Accessed July 9, 2024, at https://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/entries/cane-hill-washington-county-2705/. Last updated December 28, 2023.
[4] "President Herbert Hoover," National Archives, Herbert Hoover, Presidential Library and Museum website. Accessed July 9, 2024, at https://hoover.archives.gov/hoovers/president-herbert-hoover. Hoover (August 10, 1874-October 20, 1964) was president 1929-1933.

Dispatches from Cane Hill

Updates on preservation and research at the major county historical site

By Vanessa McKuin

A *Flashback* article in the Spring of 2020 highlighted a new book and some of the fascinating photographs that help illustrate Cane Hill's story from 1827 into the mid-20th century. Much about Cane Hill's settlement and educational history is well known; however, there are still lesser-known parts of the area's history being highlighted through Historic Cane Hill's current work.

Historic Cane Hill has continued the historic preservation and research work begun in 2013 with exciting results. Since 2020, Historic Cane Hill has acquired four additional historic structures and added more than 100 acres to our holdings. These acquisitions and subsequent preservation projects are expanding the footprint of restored structures in Cane Hill and providing a new understanding of Cane Hill's history.

Historic Properties

The 1896 John and Alice Edmiston house is an iconic Cane Hill property that served as Historic Cane Hill's first office in 2013. With the support of two grants from the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program and private funding, by the end of 2024 major foundation repairs and exterior renovations of the home will be complete. Among the "treasures" found in the attic during the construction work were the two missing original wood windows. The house's first occupants were John and Alice Lacy Edmiston. The youngest of the prominent Edmiston family, John was a

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Vanessa Norton McKuin is the executive director of Historic Cane Hill. She enjoys learning about and helping preserve places that hold compelling stories. She is a fifth-generation Arkansan and lives with her family in Cane Hill. For more information about Historic Cane Hill, visit historiccanehillar.org.

Top photo: Restoration of the 1896 John and Alice Edmiston House is currently underway. The large home, built in the Queen Anne style with Eastlake influence is a rare rural example of this high-style architecture and illustrates the prosperity of the Edmiston family.
Below: The Bean/Mitchell House is one of Historic Cane Hill's recent acquisitions and rehabilitation projects. Research to determine the age and builder is ongoing.

leader in the Bank of Cane Hill, the Cane Hill Canning and Evaporating Company, and Edmiston General Merchandise, whose success was reflected in the ornate Queen Anne-style home in Cane Hill.[1] Plans to adapt the house for guest accommodations are underway.

Historic Cane Hill's Director of Arts and Culture, Lawrence McElroy, has taken a deep dive into the history of pottery production in the Cane Hill vicinity. Of particular importance is the work of Ohio-born master potter J.D. Wilbur, who produced the salt-glazed stoneware known as Boonsboro Pottery on the southern end of Cane Hill between 1868 and 1889.

The Arkansas Archeological Survey (ARAS) first documented Wilbur's 19th century kiln in 1972 but was only able to investigate it further with Historic Cane Hill's acquisition of the property in 2021.[2] Preliminary excavation of the J.D. Wilbur Pottery Factory by ARAS archeologists Mike Evans and Jared Pebworth uncovered a second, earlier kiln and evidence of ancillary structures. The University of Arkansas's 2023 summer training dig and ongoing excavation work by ARAS have uncovered more than 20,000 artifacts to date, including pottery sherds, partial vessels, and one intact vessel.[3]

In 2022, Historic Cane Hill acquired a Greek Revival house just north of Cane Hill on property that once belonged to Richard H. Bean, one of Cane Hill's early residents, and James and Elizabeth "Lizzie" Latta Mitchell.[4] James Mitchell was educated at Cane Hill Collegiate Institute (renamed Cane Hill College) and held several posts in the new state of Arkansas, including as a member of the House of Representatives. Mitchell

later taught at Cane Hill College before moving to Little Rock to serve as the president and editor-in-chief of the *Arkansas Democrat* newspaper.[5]

The Colburn Barn sits south of Cane Hill. Side sheds were added after the barn was constructed and were used for storage and milking cows. Photograph by Russell A. Cothren.

More research is needed to determine the exact age and the builders of the home. Property records point to two potential construction periods. A 1980 National Register survey lists the house as constructed in 1840, yet Bean did not acquire the property until 1843. Also, the porch ornamentation is similar to the 1872 Zebulon and Eunice Edmiston House in Cane Hill, which indicates a possible later construction date.[6] Preliminary stabilization work and planning for the house's restoration are underway.

In 2023, Historic Cane Hill acquired an unusual turn-of-the-20th-century barn with stone foundation walls, locally known as the Colburn Barn. The exact construction date is still unknown, but a historic barn expert's assessment and historic documents indicate that the barn may have been used in Cane Hill's apple industry. Property records show the land where the barn is located was owned by at least three commercial apple growers. J.B. Russell (and Ann Coulter Russell), one of the early commercial apple growers in Northwest Arkansas, held the land patent on the property.[7] The Russell Family Cemetery is also located on the property.

Their son J.M. Russell's (and wife Mary Beller Russell) farm was described in the late 1890s as "...225 acres of land a portion of which was part of the old homestead; has 100 acres under cultivation and 175 acres fenced. He has an apple orchard of ninety acres, on which are 3,600 trees, of the Ben Davis variety, and the yield from his orchard this year amounts to 25,000 bushels of apples. He has an evaporator, and dries about 100 bushels of green fruit per day."[8]

Remains of the old evaporator also still stand near the family cemetery. In 1889, Russell sold the property to Samuel T. Cole, an orchard owner and once the largest shareholder in the Cane Hill Canning and Evaporating Company.[9] In the 1920s, after the heyday of apple growing in Northwest Arkansas had passed, the property was sold multiple times and was eventually purchased by the Risley and Colburn family.[10] It remained in that family for a century and was used largely for hay storage

Left: The Kirby-Colburn House in February 2024 as stabilization work commenced.
Right: The house in July 2024 as painting began.

and the Colburn's dairy and farming operation in the 20th century. A timber framing repair workshop is being planned at the barn in November 2024 in partnership with the national Timber Framers Guild and the Heartwood School.

Historic Cane Hill's most recent acquisition is the circa 1890 Kirby-Colburn House, built by James and Mary Kirby, who sold the land to Cane Hill College's Board of Trustees for the 1886 college building.[11] Since February 2024, this overgrown and dilapidated structure has been transformed and brought back to life. Using historic photographs as guides, Historic Cane Hill undertook the exterior restoration, including porch reconstruction, historic window and door restoration, masonry restoration, and siding repair and replacement. Once exterior restoration is complete, Historic Cane Hill will begin planning for the interior, including restoration of several remaining floor coverings dating to circa 1939.[12]

Recent Research

Though Cane Hill was once home to a large population of Black residents, first enslaved and later freed, a void of information and cultural material such as photographs, artifacts, correspondence, etc., related to Black residents existed in the Cane Hill Museum's collection and common interpretation. In 2023, "Exploring the Roots of All Inhabitants of Cane Hill," the first phase of research with support from the Arkansas Humanities Council, helped shed new light on the history of Cane Hill's Black community.

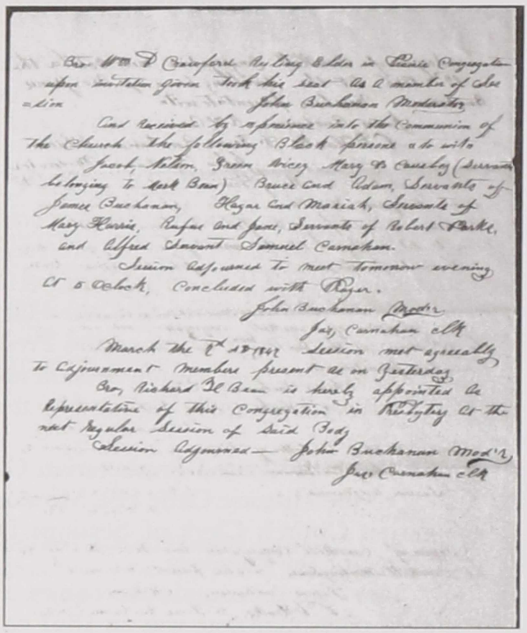
Historic Cane Hill staff and a committee of volunteers, descendants, and historians conducted research to learn more about Cane Hill's once numerous Black residents, including formerly enslaved people and their descendants. The research team compiled photographs, data, and stories about places like Cane Hill's Black settlement known as Happy Hollow through property records, school records, and interviews with long-time residents and descendants to create an extensive research bank of primary sources and a bibliography.

Along with identifying and recording the names of numerous families

Students enrolled in Fayetteville schools in 1954 are shown from left to right: Preston Lackey, Peggy Taylor, Mary M. Blackburn, Roberta Lackey, Elnora Lackey, Kenneth Morgan, and Virginia Lee Smith. Photographs with heavy black outlines are former residents of Cane Hill. Photographs are from the 1955 Fayetteville High School yearbook, the *Amethyst*.

who once lived in Cane Hill, the research helped place Cane Hill's significance in the larger context of Arkansas's educational history. A recently released 1936 map of school districts in Washington County shows only two schools marked with an "N" for "negro": one in Fayetteville and the other in Cane Hill.[13] A dive into school records available at the Washington County Courthouse and oral interviews highlighted the fact that five of the seven students who desegregated Fayetteville schools in 1954 had previously attended school in Cane Hill. Elnora Lackey, Preston Lackey, Roberta Lackey, Virginia Smith, and Peggy Taylor lived in Cane Hill and attended a school that stood on the east side of Jordan Creek, less than a quarter of a mile away from the school for white students housed in the former Cane Hill College building.[14]

Members of the project committee were Cane Hill descendants Jimmye Deffebaugh Whitfield and Tom Lackey, Humanities Scholars Dr. Cherisse



Following is a transcription of the above document which is the March 7, 1847, Session Minutes listing first names of enslaved people received into the Cane Hill Congregation of the Presbyterian Church and their enslavers. Transcribed by Susan Young:

Bro. Wm. D Crawford Ruling Elder in Prairie Congregation upon invitation given took his seat as a member of Session.

John Buchanan, Moderator

And received by experience into the communion of the church the following Blackpersons "to wit":

Jacob, Nelson, Green, Vicey, Mary, and Causbey (servants belonging to Mark Bean), Bruce and Adam, servants of James Buchanan, Hagar and Mariah, servants of Mary Harris, Rufus and Jane, servants of Robert Parks, and Alfred, servant [of] Samuel Carnahan.

Session adjourned to meet tomorrow evening at 5 o'clock. Concluded with prayer.

John Buchanan, Moderator

Jones-Branch (Arkansas State University) and Dr. Kelly Houston Jones (Arkansas Tech University), Shiloh Museum of Ozark History historian Rachel Whitaker, University of Arkansas professor Dr. Michael Anthony, local historians Susan Young and Margaret Holcomb, and Historic Cane Hill staff Lawrence McElroy and Vanessa McKuin.

Historic Cane Hill staff is continuing work to determine ways to share findings with the public, including opportunities to incorporate the history into museum exhibits, public educational programming, website and social media content, and special events.

Cane Hill Museum New Acquisitions

(Contributed by Lawrence McElroy, Director of Arts & Culture, Historic Cane Hill)

The earliest known written records of the Cane Hill Congregation of the Presbyterian Church were recently discovered by Rev. Phil Butin in a safe in the First United Presbyterian Church in Fayetteville. The records were the property of Cane Hill Presbyterian Church, successor to the early Cane Hill Cumberland Presbyterian Church. The bound minute book containing church Session minutes recorded from 1828 through the 1840s was carefully digitized by the Presbyterian Historical Society in Philadelphia.

The First United Presbyterian Church Session donated the minute book to the Historic Cane Hill Museum in May of 2024. Cane Hill Presbyterian Church Clerk of Sessions David Ellis was instrumental in arranging for the donation.

The minutes contain the names of many familiar Cane Hill families, and of particular note was an 1847 entry documenting the first names of 14 enslaved Black individuals who received Communion of the Church. The names of their enslavers were also recorded.

Another item recently donated to the Historic Cane Hill Museum is a textbook titled *Graeca Majora*, published in 1854 by Uriah Hunt & Son, Philadelphia. The leather-bound book is inscribed "James H. Crawford's book, Cane Hill College, Jan 10, 1855". James H. Crawford, was an early alumnus of Cane Hill College, graduating with a bachelor of arts degree in 1857.[15] After graduation, Crawford was immediately employed as a professor of mathematics at Cane Hill College.[16] Crawford served in the Confederate Army during the American Civil War and was killed in action around Clarksville or perhaps during the Battle of Helena.[17]

Cultural Preservation - Ensuring Traditions

In addition to research, interpretation, and historic preservation, Historic Cane Hill is actively focused on engaging area residents and visitors through programs and events that feature the historic places in and around Cane Hill. The Cane Hill Harvest Festival has long been a staple in Northwest Arkansas, spotlighting and celebrating Ozark history and culture and raising funds to maintain the Cane Hill College building. As the core group of volunteer organizers aged, the festival was in danger of ending.

In 2023, Historic Cane Hill took on the festival as a program to continue the community tradition and expand participation of volunteers, partner organizations, artisans, and crafters. For the 2024 festival in September, longtime traditions like sorghum-making, quilt show, weaving, spinning, and lace-tatting demonstrations, antique tractors, and a country breakfast will be joined by newer additions to the festival, like Crystal Bridges, a pie auction, beekeepers, University of Arkansas Archeological Survey, and a variety of makers in the Arts & Eats market.

The vision for Historic Cane Hill includes elevating arts and culture while maintaining the authenticity found in the community's natural, built, and agricultural landscape, and storied human history. As Northwest Arkansas continues to grow and change, Historic Cane Hill is uniquely situated as a cornerstone to keeping and strengthening the Ozarks' distinctive sense of place rooted in Cane Hill's important history. Through these activities and building support through community engagement, friendraising, and fundraising, Historic Cane Hill is working to ensure that the important stories of this early Arkansas community and the places that embody that history are open and available for generations to come.

Endnotes

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[2] Jared Pebworth and Mike Evans, "The J.D. Wilbur Pottery Factory," March 2023, *Arkansas Archeological Survey* website. Accessed July 2, 2024, at https://archeology.uark.edu/features/wilbur-pottery-factory/.

[3] Jared Pebworth (Arkansas Archeological Survey UofA Fayetteville Station Assistant), email communication with the author, July 8 2024.

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[8] *History of Benton, Washington, Carroll, Madison, Crawford, Franklin, and Sebastian Counties, Arkansas* (Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Co. 1889), p. 1013.

[9] Ibid., p. 927.

[10] Washington County Arkansas Archives, "*Land Record Search 1834-1991*," Warranty Deed: Samuel T. to J.W. Risley. Accessed July 8, 2024, at https://chronicle.washingtoncountyar.gov/chronicle/ChronicleDocumentSearch.asp?S=Y, Book 179, p. 542.

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[11] Washington County Arkansas Archives, "*Land Record Search 1834-1991*." Accessed July 8, 2024, at https://chronicle.washingtoncountyar.gov/chronicle/ChronicleDocumentSearch.asp?S=Y, Deed Book W2, p. 112.

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[13] Arkansas GIS Office, "New Dataset! 1936 School District Maps by County: Washington_County_School_Districts_1936.pdf." Last modified September 7, 2022. Accessed July 2, 2024, at https://gis.arkansas.gov/2022/09/07/new-dataset-1936-school-districts-maps-by-county/ https://geostor-uploads.s3.amazonaws.com/index.html#maps/School_Districts_1936/pdf/.

[14] Washington County Archives, 1946 School Census Records, Cane Hill (57) District, "1946 Family Census Blank for Persons Aged 6 to 18." Census form containing information for Roberta, Elnora, and Preson Lackey, Jr. and signed by Preston Lackey, Sr., and form for Peggyann Taylor signed by James Taylor (# 1943,1945).

Virginia Smith, in discussion with the author, May 2, 2023. During a visit to sites around Cane Hill, Virginia recalled that when she was 4-5 years old she would meet up with Peggy Taylor, who lived nearby and walk with her to school and spend the day. Virginia was too young to be enrolled, so is not listed in Cane Hill school census records. She officially started school when her family moved to Fayetteville.

The Amethyst Yearbook (1955), Fayetteville High School, Fayetteville, Arkansas.

[15] Robert Herold Basham, PhD dissertation, "A History of Cane Hill College in Arkansas," (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas, 1969) p. 211.

[16] Advertisement, "Cane Hill College," *Arkansas Gazette*, July 15, 1856, and September 13, 1856.

[17] Dr. Eric J. Moffett, "A Stack of Books: Crawford & Johnson Families," *Madison County Musings*, 2024, Spring, p 1.

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Sisters Abroad, Part II:

Eva and Lenora Johnson travel on to Asia, Europe, and finally home

Part II of a two-part article about a 'round-the-world voyage of two young Fayetteville women in 1928

By Amanda Bancroft

In Part I, the Johnson sisters were on board the S.S. President Jackson docked in Yokohama, Japan, on February 6, 1928. As snow fell on the deck, they learned of the unfortunate death during the previous night of a Chinese butcher, which alarmed the Japanese officials. Eva Johnson wrote that "the Health Officers made quite a to-do about it...but finally decided to let us land." Later, authorities seized 50 tins of Chinese opium being smuggled aboard the sisters' ship, hidden in the double wall between the laundry and refrigerator in a corner on the port side of the vessel.[1]

Trips 'round-the-world in the 1920s were therefore more than just a pleasure cruise, with occasional crime and tragedy on board. Events such as those above may have been unrelated, of course; details are often lacking.

For example, Eva journaled, "Feb. 12 – We awakened by an earthquake."[2] Full stop. Lenora explained in a letter home that "Yokohama and Tokyo as you know were severely damaged by an earthquake September 1st, 1923, this being followed by a great fire which destroyed the larger portion of the city." Much of Yokohama and surroundings were still in ruins, and temporary buildings had been erected. Reconstruction was rapidly progressing, but Lenora worried the New Tokyo would adopt American architecture and not be as picturesque.

They both raved about the Japanese people and culture. Lenora said they visited so many beautiful temples, she almost had "temple-itis." But

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they found one unpleasant aspect quite familiar. Eva wrote, "The Japanese buildings are not so well heated…Lenora said they reminded her of home"[3] – and their parents' drafty farmhouse in Arkansas. Throughout the trip they note similarities between their life at home and foreign destinations.

Lenora was fascinated by the shops in Kyoto. "The better shops of truly Japanese type do not have display windows. One enters a very ordinary looking door and goes upstairs (the family almost always lives below). Here one finds a very small shop where only a few things are seen. Tea is almost always served immediately after your arrival. Then all sorts of interesting wares are pulled out from this corner or that one. Many of these shops have been run by the same family for several generations."

Eva wrote that snowy Japan looked "like a fairyland" with snow-clad trees glistening in the sunlight. They were especially in awe of Mount Fuji, which they glimpsed only once. "Fuji is more than a mountain to the Japanese, it is a goddess, a goddess with strange, feminine moods. Sometimes she reveals her radiance in its fullness. Sometimes she envelopes herself in clouds and mists."[4]

In Tokyo, they learned that few were allowed inside the Emperor's Imperial Palace. "Lenora asked the guide if anyone was allowed to go inside the Palace. He told her if she came as the wife of the American Ambassador, she could enter."[5]

Sampans or "slipper ships" at port in Shanghai, China in February 1928. Eva wrote "A sampan is a long, low boat from 15 to 50 ft long, with one end covered over and looking like a giant Chinese slipper, often called 'slipper boats'. It is said that thousands of Chinese are born, live and die on these boats and know no other home."

China and Hong Kong

"Socially and intellectually Shanghai is the center of this part of the world," Eva wrote in her journal. "Shanghai is composed of English, French and German concessions with traffic policemen whose costumes vary according to the concession in which they are. In the English concession are tall, sombre and stately Sikhs from India in blue uniforms with brass buttons and wearing great yellow or red turbans above their black bearded faces."

After a rickshaw

tour of the city, Eva wrote, "We decided we didn't want to live in Shanghai."[6] Lenora was deeply disturbed by the poverty, suffering, and disease she witnessed. Women lay "in the gutters" dressed only in rags, with naked babies that she worried would have no future.

Lenora was horrified yet impressed when she saw small boys about 10 years old "doing beautiful embroidery on silk under-things. I was told they were paid the unbelievable small sum of 3 Mexican dollars ($1.50 our money) per month for their work." Her brother Wilton had adopted his wife's son, whom they called Junior, about the same age as the boys embroidering silk. "Could you keep Junior still long enough to make an initial on a handkerchief much less long enough to make a whole garment very carefully embroidered in intricate design?"[7]

Their next stop was Hong Kong, which means "the fragrant harbor" in Cantonese. The island of Hong Kong and city of Victoria (also called Hong Kong) – a "paradise for shoppers" – were visibly impacted by the British imperial presence, with infrastructure that made Eva and Lenora's tour easier as they rode along in sedan chairs or motored up and down the forested mountain road.

Upon returning to their ship, Eva, amused, wrote that "The Chinese are very fond of birds. Someone bought two singers at Hong Kong, and they have been singing lustily all day to-day."[8]

PHILIPPINES

"Feb. 28 – When we left Hong Kong we were wearing winter coats, but when we stepped onto the concrete floor of the steel pier built by American engineers at Manila, we were wearing our coolest summer clothes, for we had come to the real tropics," Eva wrote. This "Pearl of the Orient" was a great place to "prowl around in the walled city." Eva explained that Manila was divided into three parts. One was a Spanish white-walled Intramuros, a city of medieval streets. Outside of this, along the Pasig River, were sprawling native residences and the market. The third section was American and included banks, moving picture houses, and the steamship offices.

In Manila, Lenora was impressed by an organ pipe made of bamboo that "played quite well" and was supposedly the only one of its kind. She was also surprised at the botanical garden's aquarium. "They have several fish here that I have never seen before. One is a little blue fish about the size of a quarter, hardly so round, but a bright blue. It is called sapphire fish." They also passed "many native huts of palm leaves covered with a thatch roof and perched high above the ground."[9] They visited old churches and convents, and also observed raw materials like coconuts, tobacco, and hemp being processed.

Throughout their trip, they made a point of touring every college they could find. "The oldest university under the American flag is in Manila, established 1611," Eva wrote. In her youth, she had wished to attend a prestigious university like Harvard, where her youngest brother Benjamin Frank-

lin Johnson III was a student studying landscape architecture, but women were not allowed until much later.[10]

Clearly, this didn't stop industrious Eva from putting her business degree to good use, even though she herself felt it had been wasted as she "never used it" as she had intended. She graduated in 1912 from the Fayetteville Business College, earned her bachelor's from Missouri State Normal School in Springfield, and her Master's in Business Administration from Columbia University in New York City.

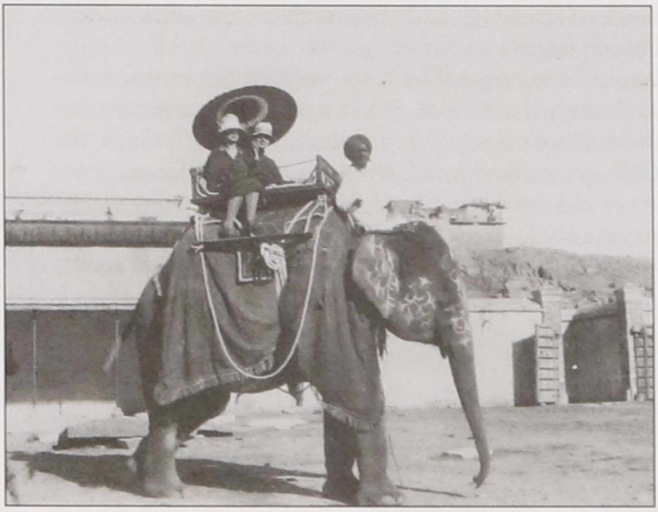
Eva Johnson rides in a rickshaw in Singapore on Lenora's 39th birthday, March 6, 1928.

Singapore, Penang and Burma

"We arrived at Singapore, Malay State Settlements, 'the crossroads of the East'." Eva wrote. "The population of Singapore is an amazing conglomerate of races. No 'melting pot' process is urged. Each group has brought along and preserves its own customs, habits, religion and peculiarities of costume. At one moment you might well imagine that you are in a Chinese city, in another moment in an Indian and then in a Japanese city."

In a postcard, Lenora wrote, "We're at Penang now, are leaving today for Rangoon. You might think it would be very hot here at night, but we were very comfortable, about like the south room upstairs early in the morning [at the farm near Fayetteville]. I had a pretty cake with candles and fancy icing on my birthday. The Chief Cook on President Hayes made it."[11] Eva had secretly arranged for the cake and wrote that Lenora was quite surprised when the waiter brought it to their table at dinner.[12]

In an unsigned letter home from Penang on March 10, one sister wrote, "I wish especially that you could see our bath room. There is a big earthenware vessel, shaped much like a jardinière, which is filled with water. One stands on the floor and spreads on the soap, then dips water from this vessel and pours it on. Reminds us of our shower baths at the spring." Their Arkansas farmhouse still has a springhouse straddling the stream of an underground spring where the family took baths before running water.



Eva and Lenora Johnson on an elephant ride to the Palace of Amber, Jaipur, India, April 1, 1928.

Elephants piling teak, Rangoon, Burma, March 13, 1928. Eva wrote: "Since Kipling published the *Barrack-Room Ballads* every traveler coming to Rangoon has demanded to see the 'Elephants a-pilin' teak in the sludgy, squdgy creek.' Elsewhere in the teak yards, steam engines and cranes seemed to have supplanted the elephants."[13]

India and Ceylon

"In India, they eat five times a day," Eva journaled, "an early breakfast, called chota, hazri breakfast at 9 o'clock, lunch or tiffin, tea at four and dinner at 7 or 8 o'clock." They bought a pound of Darjeeling tea, considered the finest in the world.[14]

Eva was shocked that they could be in the Himalayan Mountains of north India and yet meet a guide who was a former student at Stanford, where they had just visited in California. She wrote, "Our guide was a Nepalese, Lenora asked him where he would rather live, in Darjeeling or Calcutta. He said, 'Darjeeling. The people of Calcutta are not happy.'"[15]

To cross India, the sisters took trains. "The Indian trains furnish no bedding, so each traveler must provide his own bedroll, which contains a pillow, pillow cases, a pair of blankets and sheets. India has its own peculiar traveling conditions. Every traveler has a personal servant or bearer, who acts as interpreter and valet. Our servant's name was Ram Jethan."[16]

It was extremely hot in Bombay, but they were grateful for their room's big electric fan. "We would both like to have a big drink from the old spring. I feel like I could drink about a gallon."[17]

Eva journaled that Jaipur is known as the Pink City because "one of the Maharajahs liked pink, so almost every house is painted pink, varying from palest shell color to deep vermillion. A pink city flooded with sunshine and inhabited by a moving mass of picturesque cocoa-colored people all dressed in white, bright yellow, green, pink, purple or red with turbans so enormous and so wondrously tied that it seemed as though forty yards of muslin or silk must have gone into each one."[18]

At the southern tip of India, they ferried to the Island of Ceylon (Sri Lanka). They traveled by train to reach Colombo on Easter morning. Eva liked Colombo best of all, because it rained every day, all was green, the city was clean, and the people seemed happy and prosperous.

While in Ceylon, they toured a tea factory "where we saw the whole process of drying, sorting, and packing tea. They seemed to make about six or seven grades according to the position of the leaf on the stalk."[19] In Kandy, they reveled in the tropical plants of the Botanical Garden and the myriad spice trees. Lenora mailed spice tree leaves of cinnamon, allspice, clove, and bay to her brother Wilton and his wife Martha.

Palestine

Sailing to the Middle East, Eva wondered how the Red Sea got its name when it wasn't red! After they arrived in Palestine, they visited famous churches and natural features with religious significance, including Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity, the Mosque of Omar, Mt. Zion, the Garden of Gethsemane, the Dead Sea, the River Jordan, and Jericho. Jerusalem's narrow cobblestone streets were not wide enough to accommodate automobiles, they wrote, but wider streets were being built outside the walls.

"To-day we went to Jaffa," Eva wrote to her family. "It was near this port that the whale swallowed Jonah, but we saw neither the whale nor Jonah."[20] Before leaving Jerusalem, they attended Sunday morning services: a Greek Orthodox Service at 9:30 a.m. and an Armenian Service after that. "Both forms of worship are quite different to ours. They stand during the entire service," Eva observed.[21]

Egypt

Eva's sense of humor came out again when she wrote home: "We visited the Valley of the Kings and saw the tombs of two kings. There were 64 but we thought two enough."[22] The desert sand was so hot they could hardly stand it and mused about how it could be possible for those who built the pyramids to have tolerated it. In the Valley of the Queens, Lenora was surprised that inside the tombs Egyptian artwork had lasted "more than 3,500 years. It seems almost impossible that paint could hold its color all these years."

One night, they sailed the Nile on a cool breeze. "Eva has always wanted to sail in a sure enough sail-boat so last night we had a sail on the Nile by moonlight. The moon was at its best, so I think she really enjoyed it. I did anyhow," Lenora wrote.

Lenora feeds the pigeons in front of the Cathedral of Saint Mark's Basilica in Venice, Italy, June 14, 1928. Lenora wrote, "St. Mark's has the best mosaics in the world."[23]

Italy

"We have been going so hard since we landed in Naples that when we come in at night we are too tired to write or darn stockings, so we have got behind with both. It is rainy this morning so I'm trying to do both jobs," Lenora wrote to her mother.

"Well, here we are in Rome and Lenora has been reveling in going over the places where the mighty Caesar trod," Eva wrote. One wonders if Eva was reveling, too, since she couldn't understand how Lenora stood all the walking they did to see the Colosseum, Pantheon, and many churches. Eva wrote that "St. Paul's is the most beautiful church in Rome; St. John's, the oldest; St. Marie [sic] Maggiore, the richest; St. Peter's, the largest...."[24]

Lenora was eager to see "the masterpieces by Raphael, Michelangelo, Guido Reni, Titian, and all the best pieces of statuary at Rome and Florence." Meanwhile, Eva admired the water features. "In the Villa D'Este there are about six hundred fountains. It takes lots of water to keep them going, but the effect is very pretty." Lenora observed Venetian glass blowing and longingly watched the process of lacemaking through a window as she wrote that buying the lace she liked would "put a hole in a millionaire's pocket."

Switzerland and Germany

When it was cold, they changed from summer clothes into their winter coats. In the grassy foothills of the Alps were many wildflowers such as blue gentians and yellow buttercups. "Lenora and I climbed up on Balisalp and picked some Alpen roses, which only grow high up, but we didn't climb as high as the snow," Eva wrote home.[25]

Eva was always thinking of ways to reduce the labor of housework for her mother. "The Continental breakfast consists of coffee, tea, or chocolate, rolls, butter and jam, and that's all," Eva explained to her mother. "Haven't we always told you, you cooked too much for breakfast? Think how much easier to get up and make a pot of coffee and set out the rolls, butter and jam." Sounds deliciously simple!

They liked Switzerland so much that they changed plans and stayed in Lucerne a week and another week in Hohfluh, a quiet country town in

the mountains, to rest up for Paris and London.

From Holfluh they traveled to Heidelberg. Their farm roots turned the Johnson sisters into agricultural tourists in a post-WWI decade. "Germany (the part we saw) looks fairly prosperous," Eva observed. "The grain crops look good. We did not see as many crippled men as we expected to." She asked how the apples were doing back in Arkansas in the orchard at the farm. "Suppose the apples are large enough to make applesauce. We had our first last night, the first new applesauce."[26]

The Netherlands

When the sisters arrived in "Dutchland," they were sorry to see that the people of the Netherlands dress like the rest of the world. But in remote areas like the Isle of Marken, they saw traditional clothing including wooden shoes, black baggy trousers, full red petticoats, and starched lace caps.

On this island, they visited a dairy barn, and Lenora said, "I am afraid Papa would say it would be too expensive to maintain his cows in the way those of the Hollanders are kept up. What would you think of a contrivance which lifts a cow's tail off the floor to keep it clean when she lies down?"[27] They saw cheese being made and had a drink of real buttermilk, "the first I've had since I was in Arkansas."

In the Hague, they visited the Peace Palace with gifts from countries around the world. Lenora wrote that what she remembered best "was the sound of the carillons or bells which chime out the hours or announce church etc."

France

"At last we are in Pari," Lenora wrote. "I find it very interesting but not in the way I had expected. I like it for the pretty gardens and beautiful views one gets down tree lined avenues rather than for the fashions and gay life."[28] They visited Napoleon's tomb, the Eiffel Tower, and the Louvre, and attended church in Notre Dame.

They stayed at the American University Women's Club in Paris and felt lucky to do so. As a teacher, Lenora reflected that many American teachers would not be able to afford the hotels in Paris. Lenora obtained her teacher's certificate from the University of Arkansas summer school, her bachelor's from Missouri State Normal School in Springfield, and spent a summer term as a graduate student at Chicago University before acquiring her Master's in Education from the University of Missouri, Columbia. Because she was offered various jobs at teacher's colleges around the country during the 1920s, she completed all requirements but her dissertation for a Ph.D. at Columbia University in New York City.

They traveled around the Chateau District of France and explored large estates. The Chateau of Chambord was 14,000 acres, "about as much acreage as covered by the city of Paris." They stopped by many of the places their brothers Wilton and Wayne were stationed in during WWI, including the spot where Wayne was killed in 1918 at Belleau Woods, Chateau-Thierry.

England

In between rain showers, they visited the Parliament building, Westminster Abbey, Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle, Hyde Park, and the British Museum where they saw the Rosetta Stone. They had wanted to see more but rain prevented it. "This is the first place where we have been bothered by the rain. I never saw it come down with as little effort as in London. It would not even sprinkle at home with so few clouds."

Anne Hathaway's Cottage and street scene, Stratford-on-Avon, England, 1928.]

Ever interested in education, the sisters visited Cambridge, Eton, and Oxford. Rachel wrote to her daughters that "I do hope you will enjoy your visit to England. Say, you might meet Mrs. Fulbright and Bill."[29] James William Fulbright graduated from Oxford in 1928 as a Rhodes Scholar at Pembroke College, but Eva and Lenora didn't write whether they ran into "Bill" or not.

"I believe the 'backs of Cambridge are prettier than the courts of Oxford' though some of these are quite nice," Lenora wrote her brother, Benjamin Franklin Johnson III. At Eton College, they watched in surprise as boys ages 12-18 were literally "running around with tall silk hats and often cut away coats. It seems an old custom of the school which is still in vogue."

Scotland

Lenora wrote home on September 13, 1928: "Dear Mama, Did you ever think you would get a letter from me from Scotland? I didn't. It all seems like a dream, we have been so many places." The pollution in London was nothing compared to Edinburgh (nicknamed "Old Smoky") which was choked with smoke and bothered them.[30] Nevertheless, they enjoyed the sights of the city and the countryside.

Lenora wrote in a postcard, "I saw this monument to Greyfriar's Bobby the other day. This has been a most interesting year for me. I have seen so many worthwhile places and met such interesting people."[31] Bobby was a wee Skye Terrier which some consider the most famous dog in Scotland. After his master, John Gray or "Auld Jock," a night watchman, died of tuberculosis in 1858, the loyal dog Bobby guarded his grave in

Washington County Historical Society

announces

The 16th Annual Competition for Articles on History of Washington County

The Washington County Historical Society announces the 16th annual competition for two awards for articles about the history of Washington County. Each award carries an honorarium of $250. The two categories of awards are:

* The Walter J. Lemke Prize for best article on Washington County history, with preference given to subjects outside Fayetteville;
* The Lessie Stringfellow Read Prize for best article on Washington County history, with a focus on Fayetteville.

Topics can address any aspect of county history, including archeology, lives of individuals, architecture, arts and crafts, or records of institutions, and can be set in any time period. All historians – both professional and amateur – are invited to submit articles. Winners will be recognized at the society's annual meeting in October.

Deadline for submissions is June 30, 2025.

Judging is based on contributions to the expansion of the county's history; originality of the subject; and use of primary and secondary sources. Articles must be original material, and not previously published.

Submissions must be typed, and preferably include endnotes. Length – not including endnotes – can range from 2,500 words to 5,000 words. The title page should be headed: "WCHS Prize," followed by the manuscript full title, and the author's name, mailing address, telephone number, and email.

Entries become the property of the Washington County Historical Society and will not be returned. All submissions will be considered for publication in the WCHS journal *Flashback*. WCHS reserves the right to award one or no prizes. Back issues of *Flashback* are available at the Fayetteville Public Library.

Submit manuscripts by June 30, 2025, by mail or email:

* By mail: Patsy Watkins, WCHS Prize, Washington County Historical Society, 118 E. Dickson Street, Fayetteville, AR 72701.
* Email: Patsy Watkins at pwatkins@uark.edu

For questions, contact Watkins at pwatkins@uark.edu.

Greyfriar's Kirkyard for the next 14 years until it died in 1872.[32]

Lenora thought her homeland just needed better marketing to compete with the beauty of Scotland. "Scotland is pretty, but I wonder how U.S.A. would sound in print with a Sir Walter Scott or a Burns to paint the pictures. I believe the tourist stream would be a little more evenly divided as regards the western trend."[33]

Finally, it was time to cross the Atlantic. They sailed on the S.S. President Roosevelt from Southampton, England, on September 27 to the port of New York, arriving October 5, 1928. "We still like to travel by water best. I guess I shall have to get myself a job as stewardess on board some steamship so I can stay on the water all the time."[34] Eva wrote, half-jokingly.

Instead of becoming a stewardess, Eva returned to Fayetteville and then continued her job as a secretary in Seminole, Oklahoma. Lenora remained in New York to attend Columbia University and to train teachers at teacher's colleges. One year after the completion of their 'round-the-world trip, the Wall Street Crash of October 24, 1929, marked the end of the Roaring Twenties and the beginning of the Great Depression.

The clever reader may realize that only one sister actually girdled the globe by returning to her original starting point in Fayetteville. Eva was well ahead of her time (and Disney) when she wrote, "One constantly realizes that the world is not very large after all."[35]

Endnotes

[1] United Nations, Geneva. Library Archives. Accessed April 29, 2024, at https://archives.ungeneva.org/informationobject/browse?topLod=0&sort=relevance&query=S.S.+President+Jackson%2C+1928.
[2] Johnson Family Papers, "Black Diary." Eva writes from Japan, February 12, 1928.
[3] Johnson Family Papers, Letter from Eva Johnson to family, February 8, 1928.
[4] Johnson Family Papers, "Black Diary." Eva writes from Japan, February 13, 1928.
[5] Johnson Family Papers, Letter from Eva Johnson to family, February 8, 1928.
[6] Johnson Family Papers, Letter from Eva Johnson to family, February 27, 1928.
[7] Johnson Family Papers, Letter from Lenora Johnson to brother Wilton, April 19, 1928.
[8] Johnson Family Papers, Letter from Eva Johnson to family, February 27, 1928.
[9] Johnson Family Papers, Letter from Lenora Johnson to family, February 29, 1928.
[10] "Women at Harvard University," Accessed at https://guides.library.harvard.edu/c.php?g=1108872&p=8085578.
[11] Johnson Family Papers, Postcard from Lenora Johnson to family, March 10, 1928.
[12] Johnson Family Papers, "Black Diary." Eva writes from Singapore, March 7, 1928.
[13] Johnson Family Papers, "Black Diary." Eva writes from Rangoon, March 14, 1928.
[14] Johnson Family Papers, "Black Diary." Eva writes from Benares, March 26, 1928.
[15] Johnson Family Papers, "Black Diary." Eva writes from Darjeeling, March 20, 1928.
[16] Johnson Family Papers, "Black Diary." Eva writes from Benares, March 24, 1928.
[17] Johnson Family Papers, Letter from Eva Johnson to family, April 4, 1928.
[18] Johnson Family Papers, "Black Diary." Eva writes from Jaipur, March 31, 1928.
[19] Johnson Family Papers, Letter from Eva Johnson to family, April 19, 1928.
[20] Johnson Family Papers, Letter from Eva Johnson to family, April 27, 1928.

[21] Johnson Family Papers, Letter from Eva Johnson to family, May 4, 1928.
[22] Johnson Family Papers, Letter from Eva Johnson to family, May 4, 1928.
[23] Johnson Family Papers, Letter from Lenora Johnson to family, June 26, 1928.
[24] Johnson Family Papers, Letter from Eva Johnson to family, May 25, 1928.
[25] Johnson Family Papers, Letter from Eva Johnson to family, July 9, 1928.
[26] Johnson Family Papers, Letter from Eva Johnson to family, July 9, 1928.
[27] Johnson Family Papers, Letter from Lenora Johnson to family, July 14, 1928.
[28] Johnson Family Papers, Letter from Lenora Johnson to family, August 3, 1928.
[29] Johnson Family Papers, Letter from Rachel Johnson to Eva and Lenora Johnson, September 5, 1928.
[30] Johnson Family Papers, Letter from Lenora Johnson to family, September 13, 1928.
[31] Johnson Family Papers, Postcard from Lenora Johnson to Miss Trousdale, unmailed.
[32] "The Story of Greyfriar's Bobby" Accessed at https://scotlandwelcomesyou.com/greyfriars-bobby/
[33] Johnson Family Papers, Letter from Lenora Johnson to family, September 13, 1928.
[34] Johnson Family Papers, Letter from Eva Johnson to family, October 19, 1928.
[35] Johnson Family Papers, Letter from Eva Johnson to family, April 20, 1928. The reference to Disney concerns the song "It's a Small World." played on a Disneyland ride. The song was written by the Sherman Brothers in 1963.

Moses Dutton:

Goshen's soldier, preacher, and postmaster

By Russell Gayer

Moses P. Dutton was born in Virginia in 1816, the second child of John and Susannah Stepp Dutton. John was born in South Carolina in 1775; Susannah was also born in South Carolina, about 1785.[1]

Sometime in the 1830s, the Dutton family moved to Washington County, Arkansas, and settled in the area that would later become Goshen.

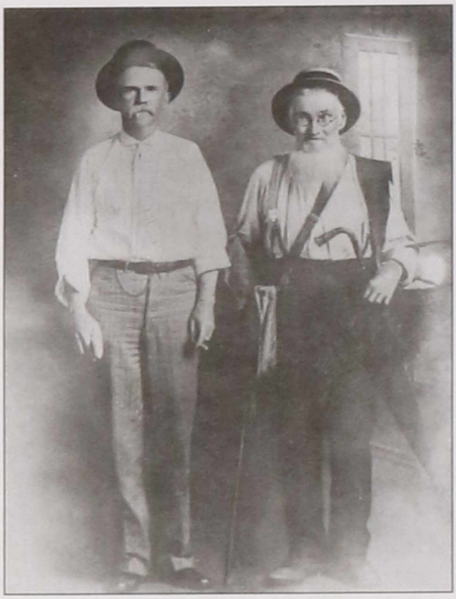
By the spring of 1836, the Indian wars in the eastern part of the United States appeared to be spreading westward. The last territorial governor of Arkansas, William S. Fulton, received a petition from citizens in Miller County on May 3, 1836, "praying for a defensive force for their frontier." The petition asserted that Indians were gathering in larger numbers and that the threat was especially severe because many of the male citizens of Miller County had left to aid the Texans in their revolution against Mexico.[2]

At President Andrew Jackson's request, Congress appropriated funds to pay for volunteer troops to be raised in Arkansas. Secretary of War Lewis Cass wrote Gov. Fulton on May 15, 1836, directing him to attempt to raise 1,000 volunteers. Cass promised the men would be paid for their services and provided the necessary arms and equipment.[3]

Russell Gayer is a 5th generation Ozark native, residing on the original family homestead near Goshen, Arkansas. He facilitates the Goshen Historical Society quarterly meetings and serves on the Goshen Cemetery Board. Russell is the author of The Perils of Heavy Thinking *and* One Idiot Short of a Village. *He also enjoys writing non-fiction articles on local history.*

Volunteers from Northwest Arkansas enlisted in The First (and only) Battalion of the Second Regiment of Arkansas Mounted Gunmen commanded by Maj. Onesimus Evans. The organization was generally known as "Maj. Evans Battalion or the Washington County Battalion." [Onesimus Evans was one of the men sent in 1841-1842 to return escaped slave Nelson Hackett from Canada to Fayetteville. In his escape Hackett had stolen Evans' gold watch. See the "Nelson Hackett Project."[4]]

Moses Dutton was mustered in at Fayetteville on September 30, 1936. His rank was listed as Private, Company B, 1st Battalion, 2nd Regiment.[5]



Moses Dutton (right) and Vol Walker*. Courtesy Shiloh Museum of Ozark History/ Washington County Historical Society collection (P-2298).

Maj. Evans and his company rode to Fort Coffee, Oklahoma, and were enrolled into the U.S. Service. They then proceeded to Fort Gibson, Oklahoma, to await the arrival of other companies.[6]

There were apparently few newsworthy activities in Maj. Evans' battalion. In early December, they escorted a wagon train loaded with clothing for the U.S. Dragoons and the Seventh U.S. Infantry from Fort Gibson to Nacogdoches, Texas. They stopped at Fort Towson, Oklahoma, on December 27, 1836, on their return trip to Fort Gibson.[7]

On December 4, 1836, Dr. Micajah H. Clark was appointed assistant surgeon of the battalion (the battalion's only surgeon). Dr. Clark was a practicing physician in Fayetteville at the time.[8]

Moses Dutton was mustered out on March 30, 1837, on the completion of six months service.[9]

Around 1840, Moses married Elizabeth Lane Ferguson, who was born April 25, 1821, in Tennessee. The couple had nine children: Rev. John Wesley (1842), Martha (1845), Sarah Jane (1847), Margaret A. (1850), James B. (1852), Nancy W. (1854), Idela Elzara (1857), Chilacy (1858), and Moses Jefferson "Mose" (1862).[10]

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*James Volney "Vol" Walker was an 1877 UofA graduate, a respected lawyer, and member of the Arkansas legislature, instrumental in keeping the university in Fayetteville. Vol Walker Hall, home of the Fay Jones School of Architecture, is named for him. "Fine Lines and Late Nights: The Converging Histories of Vol Walker Hall and the Fay Jones School of Architecture," UofA University Libraries Special Collections.

The 1850 census of Brush Creek Township, Washington County (east of Springdale and north of Goshen), Arkansas, lists Moses Dutton as a Methodist Clergyman.[11]

Rev. Dutton later served in the Confederate Army with the 35th Arkansas Infantry, Co. K,[12] under Gen. Price's Division and Brig. Gen. James F. Fagan's Brigade at Prairie Grove.[13]

In 1862, he would have been 46 years old. It is not known if Rev. Dutton volunteered or was conscripted into service. Others from the Goshen area in the same company were: William Cannon, Thomas Cannon, J. G. Tunstill, George Gregg, William Phillips, and John Oxford.[14]

In January 1876, Rev. Dutton became postmaster of College Grove and changed the name to Goshen in June of that same year.[15] Some speculate that as a minister, Rev. Dutton thought the community should have a biblical name. Church history cites John B. Phillips and his wife, Lucinda Williams Phillips, as active members in the Methodist Episcopal Church (South) and instrumental in getting the area renamed Goshen.[16]

The name Goshen refers to a pastoral region in Egypt, given to the Hebrews by the pharaoh of Joseph.[17] In Genesis 47:3-6, the pharaoh refers to the region as the best part of the land. In the Exodus narration of the plagues of Egypt, Goshen, the dwelling place of the Israelites, is spared the plague of flies (Exodus 8:22) and the plague of hail (Exodus 9:26) that afflicted the Egyptians.

On April 18, 1880, Goshen was also hit by a "cyclone" that ripped across the Fayetteville square, killing one person and destroying many buildings.[18]

Details of the destruction were reported in *The Arkansas Sentinel* the following week:

> Beyond the city, considerable damage was done to the country, particularly at Goshen, a little village about ten miles northeast of us, which was partially demolished. At Eureka Springs, many buildings were blown down and one child killed. North and south of us for a hundred miles, various currents of like destructiveness appear to have been at work. The handsome town of Marshfield, Missouri, about twenty miles east of Springfield was utterly destroyed, some 80 or 90 persons being killed and over 200 wounded. In Sebastian, Logan, Scott, Yell, and Franklin counties much property was destroyed and several lives lost.[19]

The Goshen Campground had included a church building and a brush arbor where outdoor services were held. The great cyclone of 1880 destroyed both structures. Rev. Moses Dutton helped rebuild the church. The following is a letter he wrote to his nephew, provided by Mrs. E. C. Dutton of Pico Rivera, California.[20] It reads as follows:

Goshen, Washington Co., Ark
February 10, '82
(to Jackson Dutton)

Well, Jack I received your letter today and was glad to hear from you and learn that you are doing well, and am glad that you have not forgotten me. I have many things to write of but can only mention a few of them at one writing. I am living at the same place, all the children are married but Moses. He is living with me. Your Aunt Betsy is feeble being worn down with age. My health has been bad the last two years, but is better at this time. We have a small town at Goshen. It was blown away by a terrible cyclone [sic] little over two years ago. I had a large shop. It was blown entirely away in connection with several houses. There was no lives lost, our church house and Harbor [sic] was destroyed. The town has been rebuilt. We have built a church house with a Masonic Hall on it. The building is worth one thousand dollars.

We have a fine steam mill underway of construction at Goshen. It is being put up by Dr. Kelly, Tom Cannon, and Jho. Tunstill. It will be running by harvest time. I worked on our church house for over a year, all the time that work could be done. It was a gratis business on my part and has left me behind hand but I will still live if it be in a hard way.

I contemplate visiting your country in the fall on a preaching expedition. If my health holds good and if I visit your part of the country I will write and let you know at what time I will be there. I am preaching almost as much as I ever did. I want to make a good end of my life. Brown Sharp and Martha are living with me. Their oldest child died the night before last. His name was Monroe, he was all the boy they had, he died with Rheumatism. They have four children left.

Dick Dutton lives in Hindsville is running a blacksmith shop and is doing reasonable well. Dick is a good smith. Merva her health is not good. She was well nigh dying a while back. She is in better health now. Jo Phillips is in Texas somewhere. If you know anything of him write to me and tell me where he is as I have not had a letter from them for about two years. I want you to write at once on the receipt of this letter and tell me how Bass is getting along and if you and him have enough religion to die with. If so I shall look to meet you in the better land. I close by subscribing myself.

Yours truly
Moses Dutton[21]

In August of 1886, a Grand Reunion of ex-Confederates was held at Fayetteville with 10,000 people turning out. The Fayetteville newspaper reported, "Col. J. R. Pettigrew presided at the stand and introduced the speakers. The exercises were opened by an appropriate prayer by Rev. Moses Dutton of the Methodist Church who was a soldier in the Confederate Army."[22]

When Moses Dutton died in January 1897, the following obituary ran in the *Springdale News*.

> Uncle Moses Dutton, one of the oldest residents of the county, died at his home near Goshen, yesterday afternoon at an advanced age. His life had been passed mostly in the neighborhood of the scene of his death. He was a minister of the Methodist Church South and very active in the pursuit of his calling, going from settlement to settlement to awaken interest in the cause of religion. A large family of children survive him, one of whom like himself, a preacher died a few years ago. During the war Uncle Moses served in the Confederate Army and after hostilities with renewed energies rebuilt the home that had been destroyed by war.[23]

Rev. Dutton is buried alongside his wife in the Goshen Cemetery.[24]

In August 2023, the Goshen United Methodist Church purchased a large stone to be placed beside the walking trail in Goshen's Mill Branch Park. The stone will be placed on a section of park property that once belonged to Moses Dutton, along with a plaque commemorating his contribution and service to the community.[25]

Endnotes

[1] Burley Gayer, *The Descendants of John Dutton* (Rogers, Arkansas: Self-published, 2009), p. 1.
[2] James Logan Morgan, *Arkansas Volunteers of 1836-1837: History and Roster of the First and Second Regiments of Arkansas Mounted Gunmen* (Conway, Arkansas: Arkansas Research, 1984), p. 1.
[3] Ibid., p. 2.
[4] "The Nelson Hackett Project." Website accessed September 12, 2023, at https://nelsonhackettproject.uark.edu.
[5] Morgan, *Arkansas Volunteers*, p. 51.
[6] Ibid., p. 30.
[7] Ibid., p. 31.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid., p. 51.
[10] Gayer, *The Descendants*, p. 3.
[11] Ibid., p. 2.
[12] "The Civil War," National Park Service. Website accessed August 26, 2023, at https://www.nps.gov/civilwar/search-soldiers-detail.htm?soldierId=4155D198-DC7A-DF11-BF36-B8AC6F5D926A.
[13] "Battle of Prairie Grove," *Wikipedia*. Accessed July 29, 2023, at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Prairie_Grove.
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[15] *Goodspeed's History of Benton, Washington, Carroll, Madison, Crawford, Franklin, and Sebastian Counties,*

Arkansas (Chicago, Illinois: The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1889), p. 319.
[16] Jane Allen and Sara Lumbert, *History of the Goshen United Methodist Church, 1880-1980* (Self-published, 1981), p. 19. This reference is credited to Phillip Steele of Springdale, Arkansas.
[17] "Land of Goshen," *Wikipedia*. Accessed August 6, 2023, at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Land_of_Goshen.
[18] Anthony J. Wappel with J. B. Hogan, *The Square Book: An Illustrated History of the Fayetteville Square* (Fayetteville, Arkansas: Anthony J. Wappel, 2017), p. 7. Note that at the time, the 1880s, "cyclone" was used in referring to storms we now know as "tornadoes."
[19] *The Arkansas Sentinel*, Wednesday, April 28, 1880.
[20] Allen and Lumbert, *History of the Goshen United Methodist Church*, p. 9.
[21] Ibid., pp. 9-10.
[22] *Fayetteville Weekly Democrat*, Friday, August 27, 1886.
[23] *The Springdale News*, Friday, January 29, 1897.
[24] Goshen Cemetery Association. Records accessed August 25, 2023.
[25] Interview with Mary M. Smith, arborist with the Goshen Mill Branch Park Commission, August 25, 2023.

The Self-Proclaimed "Earl of West Fork" Traces His Family's Path To Arkansas

By Jack Rash

Nobody I know has claimed the title "Earl of West Fork," so I think I will. After all, I am a direct descendant of the very first family to settle "in the heart of West Fork," according to local historian and author Denele Campbell in her book *The West Fork Valley – Its Environs & Settlement before 1900*. (Highly recommended for its thoroughness and ease of reading. Fascinating!)

In 1826, Peter and Nancy Graham (my great-great-great-great grandparents) and their 13 children left somewhere near Lexington, Kentucky, on foot, with one horse. They carried everything they could. They made it to the Arkansas River where they took a flatboat up the Arkansas to Lee Creek, walked up the valley of Lee Creek, and settled on 40 acres smack dab in the middle of what became West Fork, America, which is only four miles North on Hwy 170 from where I now sit writing this.

That information came from the *Washington County History*, published in 1989 by the Shiloh Museum of Ozark History in Springdale. It is a substantial book – 1,691 pages. My copy of the *History* was a gift from a first cousin whose mother and father's picture appear on page 593 – my Aunt Christine and Uncle Les Rash. The family name is embossed in gold

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Jack Rash is a retired writer and producer. He lives with his wife of 52 years in Fayetteville, and spends a great deal of quality time porch-sitting on his cabin four miles from West Fork.

on the front cover – "Rash Family" – a $50 purchase by Aunt Christine, more than three decades ago.

It was a letter from Aunt Christine 10 years or more after I left Fayetteville (in 1973) to pursue the girl I married 51 years ago and of course pursue what fame and fortune I could find in Dallas, Texas. The letter contained a copy of the Rash family tree, with branches labeled Graham and Lynch. The Lynches were proprietors of a post office on what was known as Lynch's Prairie where the Springdale Municipal Airport now sits. Much of what is known about early life in Northwest Arkansas can be attributed to the research done by Bobby Lynch, a distant cousin whom I never had the opportunity to meet.

I had no idea that my aunt and uncle were into genealogy, nor that I had such deep roots in Northwest Arkansas. I was born in Houston, and thought the Rash family all sprang from the ground somewhere in or near Waco, Texas. Every one of my 20-plus first cousins are or were dyed-in-the-wool Texans. When my dad announced he had been promoted, and we were moving from Houston to Texarkana, my brother and I both pitched fits until the folks agreed we would at least live on the Texas side of the two-state city! Die-hards! Even me. At least back then.

After four years in Texarkana, once again my dad was promoted and announced we were moving, this time to Fayetteville. (He worked for the Social Security Administration in an office in the Evelyn Hills Shopping Center.) I guess living so close to Arkansas for those four years, going to Boy Scout camp near Mena, and venturing into Arkansas regularly for the best flat-top haircut anywhere (it was the late '50s after all), must have diluted the burnt orange and Aggie maroon that coursed through my veins. (It didn't take long, however, to turn Cardinal Red.) Actually, my dad had a choice between Fayetteville and Baton Rouge for his assignment after Texarkana. My brother was graduating from high school, and Dad told his boss he would go anywhere there was a four-year university so he could afford to send his two boys to college. I will FOREVER be grateful for his choice!

I will always remember the first time (in 1962) I rode into Fayetteville. I was the passenger in my brother's 1929 Model A Ford. My brother was behind the wheel.

I fell IN LOVE with the place. I had never seen anything so beautiful and mysterious and serene all at the same time. How in the world can the river that tumbled along beside Hwy 71 be flowing NORTH? To me, these ancient old mountains just seemed to wrap arms around me to tell me I was supposed to be here – that I was indeed HOME.

1962 was my first year of high school, and I had the first bedroom I didn't share with my brother, who was now a freshman at the UofA and living at home. I graduated from Fayetteville High School in 1965. My junior year, I got a job as a sports reporter for the *Northwest Arkansas Times* (now *Democrat Gazette*) and worked there throughout my 5 ½-year pursuit

Seated, far left, is Mary Francis Kendrick, the 10th "child." Next to her on her left, are Martin Lynch and Nancy Graham Kendrick Lynch. Shown with them are their other nine children. The photograph, dated 1876, is courtesy of Jack Rash.

of an undergraduate degree in journalism, with side junkets into political science, speech, and English. It was at the *Times* that I met Pat Donat and her son Mike, both of whom became very dear friends. Pat sat across the newsroom from me and first introduced me to some of the history of Northwest Arkansas through her successful efforts to help save the Ridge House. (A neighbor of mine has his professional office there.)

Of course, it was the letter from Aunt Christine that truly started this remarkable journey exploring the lives of the Grahams and Lynches.

I have stood at the grave of Nelson Reed Graham, who was the youngest son of Peter and Nancy. He was an infant when the Grahams came to Arkansas and rode wrapped in blankets and strapped on the back of the family's only horse. Nelson and his wife Louisa are buried in Phillips Cemetery, which is at the far east end of Apple Blossom Road in Lowell. According to the *History*, Nelson was the first person buried there.

Nelson was killed by bushwhackers during the Civil War. (Remember: it was the Civil War, and lawlessness was rampant everywhere.) He had gone to fetch water from a nearby spring and had taken a mule, a sled for hauling the water barrels, and his youngest son. He heard riders coming up the road and sent the boy to hide in the bushes until it was safe to come out. The outlaws rode up, shot Nelson immediately, camped there overnight, then left the next morning with Nelson's mule. The boy stayed in the bushes all night until the bushwhackers left, then went home to tell his family what had happened. The *History* says they buried Nelson where he fell. The Phillips Cemetery today is one of the most beautiful and serene places I have ever been. The shadowed woods and folds of green earth are more than a thousand words can describe.

The news of Nelson's death reached his oldest daughter Nancy (named for her grandmother) some weeks later in Lockhart, Texas, where she and husband Martin Lynch had settled to raise their family. Martin had prospected for gold in California in '49, and evidently found enough to buy land in Texas.

I have a picture of Nancy and Martin Lynch and their nine children taken in 1876. There is a 10th "child" in the photo (then a grown woman) – Mary Francis Kendrick, Nancy Graham Kendrick Lynch's first born.

Wait a second – Kendrick? That is, we think his name was James Kendrick, but there is no record of his birth, all documents having been destroyed in a courthouse fire during the Civil War. Nancy Graham married James Kendrick sometime in the late 1840s or early '50s. They had a daughter (Mary Frances), who was still an infant when her mother married Martin Lynch and departed Springdale, headed for Lockhart.

According to the *History*, James Kendrick left one morning by horse for Kentucky on family business. The next day his horse showed up at the Kendrick farm without him. His body was never found. It could not have been much more than a year between Kendrick's disappearance and Nancy's marriage to Martin Lynch. This troubled me at first, but then it dawned on me that a single mother with an infant before the Civil War might not survive, let alone sustain a working farm.

I also have stood at Nancy's grave in the historic Round Rock Cemetery in an old section of present-day Round Rock, Texas. [The cemetery was established in the early 1850s, and the 19th century outlaw Sam Bass is buried there.]

Round Rock is where the family went after Martin's farm in Lockhart gave out around 1868. How I came to find her grave is another story for a different time. Nancy Graham Kendrick Lynch, mother of 10 children, died of pneumonia on July 4, 1878, at the age of 46. Pneumonia? In July? In Round Rock, Texas? How curious!

Sines Body Shop Celebrates 100 Years, Then Closes Its Doors

By Maylon Rice

Sines Body Shop, an early auto body and auto glass repair service that has been a part of the automotive history in Fayetteville since 1923, marked its 100th anniversary in early 2023.

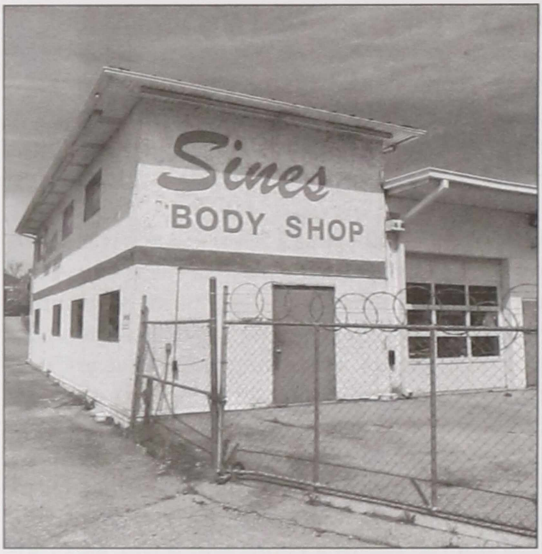
But, sadly, less than a year later, after the 2023 Christmas holidays, Sines Body Shop closed its doors, a victim of modern technology, automobiles made of differing materials, insurance reimbursement policies, the materials shortages of the pandemic, and the ever-disappearing "mom and pop" types of businesses.[1]

A developer purchased the concrete block, one-and-one-half-story, auto body shop at 2425 Old Farmington Road, near Ramay Junior High and the South Futrall Drive exit onto the northbound lanes of Interstate 49.[2]

The body shop's last owner was Jimmy Deen, who joined the business as an employee in 1984. Deen reported plans to "restructure his auto repair business on a smaller scale near his home in rural Benton County and the Northwest Arkansas Regional Airport."[3]

Sines Body Shop developed out of a venture in early 1923 called Central Auto, when a four-man consortium of E. C. Fugit, G. A. Sines, H.E. Richardson, and A.A. Mhoon opened Fayetteville's first Buick dealership.[4]

Maylon Rice is a former board member of the Arkansas Historical Association and a former board member and past president of the Washington County Historical Society. He was a reporter and columnist for the Northwest Arkansas Times *when it was a stand-alone, daily, independent newspaper in Washington County.*



Sines Body Shop at its final location near Interstate 49. The 100-year-old business is now closed. Photograph courtesy Maylon Rice.

Glenn Alfred Sines (1889-1961) joined the Buick dealership as the shop, body, and paint and repair manager.[5] At that time, Central Auto was in a modern office and showroom complex at 9-to-13 East Meadow Street, just east of the present-day Graduate Hotel (formerly the Hilton Hotel).[6]

For years, the building housed not only the Buick dealership but also Green Chevrolet and was later the home of Security Motors. The building was razed in the 1960s.[7]

Glenn Sines and his first wife, Bertha Meriam Sines (1889-1941), had three children. The eldest son, Norwood Hart Sines (1915-1986), was the second owner of Sines Body Shop after Glenn retired in 1951. After Bertha died in 1941, Glenn married Gertrude Collins (1897-1969)[8] who was the widow of Ira Rodger.[9]

In 1938, Glenn Sines moved the business out of the Fugit Building on East Meadow Street to a new location at 227 W. Dickson Street,[10] at the time, a one-story, concrete block building facing Dickson. As of 2024, that space had become the ArtCourt, an art-themed basketball court with elaborately painted mosaics on the walls.[11]

In 1951, according to an advertisement in *R. L. Polk's Fayetteville (Washington County, Ark.) City Directory*, Sines Body Shop "... specializ[ed] in tops, seat covers, body and fender work and refinishing. Car Glass and safety and plain (glass) cut to any measure." The advertisement also showed an illustration of a wrecked car (before) and a gleaming automobile (after).[12]

Norwood Hart Sines and his wife Marjorie became the owners and managers of the business. Norwood had previously been listed as an electrician in *Polk's Directory*.[13] In 1969, the Sines couple purchased 18 acres of property at 2425 Old Farmington Road and moved the business away from the crowded site along Dickson Street. That was to be the final location of Sines Body Shop.[14] There have been other business partners over the years. For a brief time Glenn Sines in 1941 partnered in Security Motors with W. M. Smith[15] and afterward remained sole owner. At Norwood Sines' retirement in 1980, the Medley family took over the business, with

Don Medley as president, Dem Medley as manager, and S.C. Medley as the foreman.[16]

By 1985, another employee, Raffe Clinton Essary and his wife Faye Essary of Farmington, purchased the business.[17] Essary was also a local race car enthusiast, competing at Thunder Valley Speedway in South Fayetteville (near Drake Field) and all over the Northwest Arkansas and East Oklahoma area.

The business was at its peak in the 1980s and 1990s. Essary was listed in the *Polk's Directory* with 15-19 employees during that period. However, the evolution of automobiles, with changes in design, paint standards, and body replacement parts, spelled the end for the small independent body shops.[18] As more and more cars used laser equipment to straighten and repair car body parts, the use of a simple tool set to detach or re-attach a hood, trunk, or fender became obsolete, and the business became too costly for an independent body shop. Also, major automobile insurers began to form coalitions with larger chains of body repair shops with area franchises.[19] Simply put, if someone wrecked a car, more than likely the insurance company would total out the car in a claim and fewer automobiles, trucks, and vans would be repaired.

At the end, Deen and his staff dropped to fewer than five employees.[20]

An in-dealership body shop that started with a coalition of businessmen bringing the first Buick dealership to Fayetteville in 1923, closed its doors after a century in service to the people of Fayetteville and Washington County.

Endnotes

[1] Interview with Jimmy Deen, owner of Sines Body Shop, 2001-2023, conducted December 15, 2023.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.
[4] *Interstate Directories Co., Springfield, Missouri, 1923*. Reference section, Fayetteville Public Library.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Kent Brown, *Fayetteville, A Pictorial History* (Brookfield, Missouri: Donning Company, 1982), p. 113.
[7] Ibid.
[8] "Glenn Alfred Sines," Find a Grave. Accessed July 23, 2024, at https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/38692573/glenn_alfred_sines.
[9] "Gertrude *Collins* Sines," Find a Grave. Accessed March 18, 2024, at https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/86339555/gertrude_sines. Gertrude Collins Sines is buried at McCord Cemetery near Elkins. Most of the Collins family of that generation are interred in McCord Cemetery. Also, interview with Cheri Coley, member of the McCord Cemetery association.
[10] *Polk's Fayetteville (Washington County, Ark.) City Directory including Washington County* (Livonia, Michigan: R.L. Polk & Co, 1939).
[11] Experience Fayetteville website. Accessed March 15, 2024, at ExperienceFayetteville.com.
[12] *Polk's Fayetteville (Washington County, Ark.) City Directory*. Printed advertisement
[13] Ibid.

[14] Interview with Deen.
[15] *Polk's Fayetteville (Washington County, Ark.) City Directory*, 1941 edition.
[16] *Polk's Fayetteville (Washington County, Ark.) City Directory*, 1982 edition.
[17] *Polk's Fayetteville (Washington County, Ark.) City Directory*, 1985 edition.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Interview with Deen.
[20] Ibid.

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